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ABSTRACT

A study tested the uses and gratifications theoretical perspective--that motivations affect media use which in turn influences the effects of that use. The American Student Dental Association targeted its publications to different subaudiences and provided a grant to the University of Texas at Austin to study (1) whether the differentiation between types of students reflected the students' actual motivations to use dental publications, and (2) their actual reading behaviors. Subjects--504 dental students--were surveyed concerning their motivations for reading nine dental magazines, their interest in various kinds of editorial content, and their actual reading habits. Motivations were measured by self reports, in which respondents were asked to rate 16 different reasons for reading dental publications on five-point Likert scales. Significant differences in motivations for reading dental publications were found between lower classmen (sophomores and juniors) and seniors and recent graduates. The study shows that knowing readers' motivations for reading dental publications can help predict those readers' interests in various kinds of content and their evaluations of and usage of various dental publications. Publishers, advertisers, and academic magazine researchers should be interested in the uses and gratifications theoretical approach because it can help publishers direct the editorial content of their publications to secure their base of readers; it can help advertisers predict where their advertisements will be the most effective; and it can help academic researchers better understand the needs of an audience. (EL)

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TARGETING AUDIENCE SUBCATEGORIES FOR SPECIALTY MAGAZINES: A USES AND GRATIFICATIONS PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

A mail survey of dental students' readership of dental publications reveals that the uses and gratifications theoretical perspective can be used to target subcategories of audiences to particular magazine content and can be used to predict audience evaluations and usage of magazines.

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Magazine publishers recognize that their economic success depends to a great extent on how well they give their readers what the readers want. Profits depend on advertising sales, advertising sales depend on circulation figures, and circulation figures depend on the extent to which readers are satisfied with editorial content. If running a profitable magazine were that easy, however, the survival rate of new magazines would be better than the real-world figure of only 10 percent making it to their second year of business.[1]

Successful magazines carefully prepare content with a particular audience in mind.[2] In fact, much of the success of the American magazine industry has been due to its specialization in content and audiences, as was obvious in an early study of 25 years of magazines by Root and Root.[3]

Much of the research on magazine audiences has been undertaken with the goal of increasing advertising sales, although some magazines also use research to guide their editorial content.[4] Attempts to differentiate among audience members have often been limited to demographic data,[5] although recently Johnson and Tims[6] used audience evaluations to discriminate among reader types and suggested that reading motivations might determine magazine reading behaviors.

It seems clear that a magazine's success could be related to the magazine journalist's ability to understand his readers and to provide content which satisfies the audience members' gratifications sought. To the extent that the editorial staff can conduct research and gather motivational audience data, the magazine content may be better directed toward subcategories of readers. It may no longer be enough to understand a magazine's "specialty" audience in unidimensional terms--as a homogeneous audience defined by its interest in the magazine's stated specialization. Even a "specialty" audience may contain important subcategories of readers who will have different motivations for reading the magazine and who will read different kinds of articles.

The theoretical basis for this line of thought comes from the uses and gratifications literature, where the research emphasis is on the individual audience member: his background and situation, his motivations (gratifications sought) for using a mass medium, his assessments of various mass media, his usage of the media, and what he gets out of them. The assumption underlying the theoretical approach is that motivations affect media use which influences the effects of that use.[7]

We decided to use this theoretical approach in the study of a very specialized set of publications and audience members--dental publications and dental students. There are more than 600 dental newsletters and magazines in the United States which range from simple, inexpensive flyers to four-color, slick magazines. While the audiences for the publications differ, we decided to concentrate on dental students, who are one segment of the overall audience for dental journalism.

Although dental students as an audience would seem to be already as specialized as is reasonable to differentiate, we felt that there would be two categories within this population worth considering. When the American Student Dental Association completely revamped its publication program in 1981 we were both employed as freelance consultants by the association and advised its board of directors to publish at least two periodicals: one which would serve the needs of the freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, and the other which would target seniors and newly graduated dentists. We believed that the lower classmen would be most interested in stories about how to get through school, such as stories on student loans and fellowships, due process for students, and stories which highlighted school activities. The seniors and new dentists, on the other hand, would be most interested in stories about how to run a dental practice, such as how to get patients, how to hire and fire employees, and the latest clinical practices. In short, the younger students would be ***motivated*** to learn how best to get through school, while the older students and new graduates would be ***motivated*** to learn what school had not taught them. The uses and gratifications theoretical model would predict that these differing motivations would result in interest in different types of articles and different actual reading patterns.

This study is the result of that discussion. The American Student Dental Association did target its publications to different subaudiences and provided a grant to The University of Texas at Austin to study whether the differentiation between types of students reflected the students' actual motivations to use dental publications and their actual reading behaviors.

We tested the following hypotheses in this study:

1. ***Underclassmen will have different motivations for reading dental publications than seniors and new graduates.*** Of 16 possible motivations we asked respondents about, we expected that six would differentiate among the two groups: We hypothesized that lowerclassmen would be more likely

than seniors and new graduates to report these motivations for reading dental publications--to find out what other dentists and dental students are doing; to enjoy dentistry free of academic pressures; and for notices about fellowships, internships, and other opportunities. We hypothesized that seniors and new graduates would be more likely than lowerclassmen to report these motivations: to get information about clinical dentistry, to get information about the business aspects of dental practice, and to get information about clinical procedures they weren't taught in school.

2. ***Underclassmen will be interested in different topics than seniors and new graduates will.*** Of the 22 topics we asked respondents to rate, we expected 15 to differentiate among the two groups. We hypothesized that lowerclassmen would be more interested than seniors and new graduates in these topics--quality of dental education, financial aid for students, dental research, dental school tuition, and due process for students. We hypothesized that seniors and new graduates would be more interested than lowerclassmen in these topics--practice management, preparing for board exams, practice location, advanced training, modes of practice, dental insurance, dental equipment and supplies, computerization, dental busyness (how busy dentists are), and dental auxiliaries.

3. ***Underclassmen will evaluate magazines which have information about getting through school as more interesting and more useful than seniors and new graduates, who will give the highest ratings to publications which emphasize clinical dentistry and practice management.*** Of the nine magazines we studied (explained in detail below), we expected lowerclassmen to rate ***ASDA Handbook***, ***ASDA News***, and ***Dental Student*** as more interesting and as containing more useful information than seniors and new graduates. We expected the reverse for ***JADA***, ***ADA News***, ***General Dentistry***, ***Dentistry84***, ***Dental Management***, and ***Dental Economics***.

4. ***Underclassmen will read magazines which have information about getting through school more than seniors and new graduates will, whereas the reverse will be true of magazines which emphasize running a dental practice and clinical dentistry.*** We expected lowerclassmen to read ***ASDA Handbook***, ***ASDA News***, and ***Dental Student*** more than seniors and new graduates do. We expected the reverse for ***JADA***, ***ADA News***, ***General Dentistry***, ***Dentistry84***, ***Dental Management***, and ***Dental Economics***. If the uses and gratification model applies, then the students' motivations should be reflected both in their interests and in their actual magazine reading behaviors.

METHOD

Data were collected by mail questionnaires during the fall and winter of 1984-85. Dental students were systematically sampled after a random start from a list of ASDA members; 82 percent of all dental students are ASDA members. The sampling was stratified by graduation class, with 300 names being sampled from each of the classes of 1984 through 1987--sophomores, juniors, seniors, and new graduates at the time of the study. Freshmen were not included, because address information was not available at the time of the study.

Three complete mailings were sent to each individual in the sample who did not respond to the first or second mailings. Of the 1,200 sampled individuals, 54 envelopes were returned due to incorrect addresses, leaving 1,146 valid names and addresses. We received 504 usable questionnaires, for a response rate of 44 percent. Although this is a lower response rate than we had hoped for, it is probably as good as can be expected for the population: Dental students are a difficult population to reach because of their school and work schedules.

We surveyed the students concerning their motivations for reading dental magazines, their interest in various kinds of editorial content, and their actual reading habits. We selected nine publications for study, which, from our own knowledge of the field and a pretest, we believe to represent the publications most read by dental students. Of the nine publications, three are published by the American Student Dental Association and are distributed as a benefit of membership:

- ***Dentistry84***--A quarterly magazine targeted at seniors and new graduates. Each issue is devoted to a theme, which is highlighted on the cover. The content emphasizes clinical and basic research, practice management, and other topics of interest to the new dentist. ***Dentistry84*** also carries quizzes, case reports, article abstracts, book reviews, and new product announcements. The title date is updated annually.
- ***ASDA News***--A monthly newspaper (during the regular academic year) which carries

association news, information about dental schools, and information about opportunities for dental students.

- *ASDA Handbook*--An annual volume which carries association member benefit information; information on scholarships, loans, and fellowships; national licensing board examination information; addresses for state and national dental associations; and other reference-type content.

Of the other six publications, three are published by associations and three are commercial, for-profit magazines.

- *Journal of the American Dental Association (JADA)*--Probably the most authoritative publication in its field, published monthly. JADA carries almost exclusively scientific articles, but has recently added a regular feature ("Emphasis") on a wide range of topics, such as clinical procedures, third-party payment systems, and association politics. Distributed as a benefit of ADA/ASDA membership. (ASDA members are automatically ADA members.) *JADA*'s departments consist mainly of state and local dental society announcements about meetings and awards, but also include legislative reports, publication reviews, new product announcements, and classified advertising.
- *ADA News*--A biweekly newspaper published by the American Dental Association, which carries information on association news and news of the profession in general. Also distributed as a benefit of ADA/ASDA membership.
- *General Dentistry*--Published monthly by the Academy for General Dentistry, the primary rival of the ADA, although it deals only with general or "family" dentistry. The magazine carries mostly clinical dental research articles. Its departments include article abstracts, book reviews, quizzes, new product announcements, and brief news items. Distributed as a benefit of AGD membership.
- *Dental Student*--A commercial magazine distributed monthly during the academic year, free of charge, to all dental students. *Dental Student* carries almost exclusively feature articles on practice management and advice for coping with dental school. Its departments include a news section, a question-and-answer column on practice management, a reader's viewpoint column, a new products section, and classified ads.
- *Dental Economics*--A commercial magazine distributed free of charge to dentists and senior dental students, published monthly. *Dental Economics* carries feature articles almost exclusively, usually on practice management topics for the dentist already in practice. Typical content includes articles on tax planning, malpractice, record-keeping, and practice sales. The regular departments include news from Washington, D.C., an economic report, a reader's viewpoint column, tax questions and answers, investment news, and new product announcements.
- *Dental Management*--A commercial magazine distributed on a subscription basis, published monthly. *Dental Management* carries practice management (stress, taxes, staff) feature articles almost exclusively. Its departments include columns on finance, law, drugs, office innovations, and management strategies as well as new product announcements, classified ads, and a calendar of upcoming events.

Motivations were measured by self-report. Respondents were asked to rate 16 different reasons for reading dental publications on five-point Likert scales, where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. See Table 1 for a list of the motivations.

Twenty-two different content topics were listed, and respondents rated topic importance on five-point Likert-type scales, where 1=very unimportant and 5=very important. See Table 2 for a list of the topics.

There were two publication evaluation measures: how interesting each publication is and how much useful information the publication supplies. Respondents rated each of the nine publications on four-point scales, where 1=not at all interesting (or no useful information) and 4=very interesting (or a lot of useful information).

We measured actual reading behaviors in three different ways. First, we asked respondents to report which of the nine publications they had read at least once in the last 12 months. Second, we asked them to report how completely they read individual issues of each publication (4=all or almost all to 1=only a little of it). Third, we asked respondents to report the percentage of one year's issues that they read of each publication (5=100% of all issues to 1=none).

RESULTS

Almost all dental students read dental publications. Of the 504 respondents only 11 reported that they were nonreaders. The biggest reason respondents gave for reading dental publications--regardless of graduation year--was to get information that will help them be practicing dentists. Table 1 shows that the top two motivations for all respondents were to get information about clinical dentistry and about the business aspects of dental practice. In hypothesis 1 we had predicted that seniors and new graduates would give this motivation more importance than lowerclassmen would; instead, both subgroups of respondents rated them very high.

Our other motivation predictions from hypothesis 1 were supported. Lowerclassmen were more likely to report these motivations: to find out what other dentists and dental students are doing; to enjoy dentistry free of academic pressures; and for notices about fellowships, internships, and other opportunities. Seniors and new graduates were more likely than lowerclassmen to want information about clinical procedures they didn't learn in school.

Table 2 shows that lowerclassmen were more interested than seniors and new graduates in these topics: quality of dental education, financial aid for students, dental research, dental school tuition, and due process for students. This supports hypothesis 2. None of our predictions for seniors and upperclassmen were supported, and in four instances topics we hypothesized to be of most interest to seniors and new graduates were actually of more interest to lowerclassmen, contrary to hypothesis 2. Lowerclassmen reported more interest in dental topics in general than seniors and new graduates did.

Next we looked at differences in evaluations of publications by the two groups of readers (Tables 3 and 4). Although some publications were evaluated in the same way by both lowerclassmen and seniors and new graduates, our predictions in hypothesis 3 were supported where differences in evaluations existed. Lowerclassmen rated ***ASDA Handbook***, ***Dental Student***, and ***ASDA News*** as having more useful information and as being more interesting than seniors and new graduates did. This was exactly what we predicted. The results for seniors and new graduates were mixed, however; they did rate ***General Dentistry*** and ***Dental Economics*** as containing more useful information than lowerclassmen did, but there was no difference between the two groups of readers in usefulness of ***JADA***, ***Dental Management***, ***Dentistry84***, or ***ADA News***. There was also no difference between how interesting ***JADA***, ***General Dentistry***, ***Dentistry84***, ***Dental Management***, ***Dental Economics***, and ***ADA News*** are to the two groups.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that lowerclassmen would read ***ASDA News***, ***Dental Student***, and ***ASDA Handbook*** more than seniors and new graduates would, and that the reverse would be true of the other six publications. Tables 5 through 7 show that, where differences between the two groups' readership exist, our hypothesis is supported. ***ASDA Handbook*** was more likely to have been read at least once during the past year by lowerclassmen than it was by seniors and new graduates (Table 5). ***JADA***, ***Dental Management***, ***Dental Economics***, and ***General Dentistry*** were more likely to have been read during the past year by seniors and new graduates than by lowerclassmen. There was no difference in readership by the two groups of ***Dental Student***, ***ADA News***, ***ASDA News***, and ***Dentistry84***, contrary to hypothesis 4.

Readership was also measured as how completely respondents read each issue of the publications and the percentage of a publications' issues which are read during the year. Table 6 shows that ***JADA***, ***ADA News***, and ***General Dentistry*** are read more thoroughly by seniors and new graduates than by lowerclassmen, as hypothesized. The hypothesized relationships between graduation year and how thoroughly the other publications are read were not evident.

Table 7 shows that hypothesis 4 was supported for lowerclassmen: they did report reading a greater percentage of a year's issues of ***Dental Student***, ***ASDA News***, and ***ASDA Handbook***--even though ***ASDA Handbook*** is published only once yearly. In addition, the hypothesis was supported for three of the six publications which we predicted would be read more by seniors and new graduates: ***Dental Economics***, ***General Dentistry***, and ***Dental Management***. The hypothesized relationship was not supported for ***JADA***, ***ADA News***, and ***Dentistry84***.

To summarize the results, our hypotheses were at least partially supported in every instance. There do seem to be differences in motivations to read dental publications between lowerclassmen and seniors and new graduates. These differences in motivations did translate into differences between the two groups' interest in various content topics, although the hypothesis was supported more for the lowerclassmen than for the seniors and new

graduates. In addition, where differences in evaluations and actual use of the publications do exist between the two groups of readers, those differences are as were hypothesized.

DISCUSSION

Although the success of the American magazine industry has been due in great part to publishers' use of specialty editorial content to attract specialty audiences, we believe that audiences can be targeted with greater precision than is currently practiced. Even in an audience category as narrow as "dental students," we have shown that the uses and gratifications theoretical approach can aid publishers in targeting their publications for increasingly specialized audiences. In an increasingly competitive magazine market, adaptation of the uses and gratifications model can give publishers a competitive edge.

The publications of a trade or professional association are often the most visible benefits the organization has to offer. A magazine that is satisfying the needs of its current readers could be used to attract new members, while a magazine that is not satisfying its readers might drive current members away. And in commercial publishing, where new magazines are born and die very quickly (often at huge expense), it is in the publisher's financial interest to find out which parts of his magazine are or are not working for which members of the audience and why.

In this study we have shown that knowing readers' motivations for reading dental publications can help us predict those readers' interests in various kinds of content and their evaluations of and usage of various dental publications. We analyzed dental students' reading patterns for nine publications, four of which are published specifically for dental students, and found some significant differences in reading behaviors between lower classmen (sophomores and juniors) and seniors and recent graduates. These differences might reflect the difference in cumulative dental knowledge between the two subgroups. (The seniors and recent graduates presumably know more dentistry than the sophomores and juniors do.) They might also indicate that seniors and recent graduates undergo different pressures from those that affect lower classmen (making a living versus getting through school) and look for different information to cope with those pressures.

The distinction between the "neophyte" and the "expert" might just as easily differentiate the readers of publications in other disciplines. A person who is already experienced in a field would have less use for basic information about that field than a newcomer, who might need the basic information to reinforce or supplement what he has learned only recently.

Armed with information about readers' motivations, a publisher could decide whether the editorial direction of his publication needed changing. Changes might include adding or deleting regular departments, using a different type of content, and running longer or shorter articles. The information might also influence the publisher's decision to redesign his publication or to change its frequency or size. If the needs of the subgroups were in direct conflict (one subgroup rated a particular type of content as very useful, while another subgroup rated it as not useful), then the publisher would have to decide whether to continue trying to appeal to all subgroups or to focus on one. The publisher might even decide, as the American Student Dental Association did, that more than one publication is necessary to serve the different subgroups.

Although mass communication theories are often not used in the real world of magazine publishing, we believe that publishers, advertisers, and academic magazine researchers should be interested in the uses and gratifications theoretical approach. The model can help publishers direct the editorial content of their publications to secure their base of readers; it can help advertisers predict where their advertisements will be the most effective; and it can help academic researchers better understand the relationship between what an audience needs and what it gets.

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NOTES

1. Leonard Mogel, ***The Magazine***, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1979, p. 3.

2. William L. Rivers, ***Magazine Editing in the '80s***, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1983, p. 3.

3. Robert Root and Christine V. Root, "Magazines in the United States: Dying or Thriving?" ***Journalism Quarterly***, 41:15-22, Winter 1964.

4. J.W. Click and Russell N. Baird, ***Magazine Editing and Production***, Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown, 1983, p. 101.

5. See, for example, Robert A. LeBouef and Marc Matre, "How Different Readers Perceive Magazine Stories and Characters," ***Journalism Quarterly***, 54:50-57, Spring 1977; and Janice S. Stewart, "Content and Readership of Teen Magazines," ***Journalism Quarterly***, 41:580-583, Autumn 1964.

6. J. David Johnson and Albert R. Tims, "Magazine Evaluations and Levels of Readership: A Cross-National Comparison," ***Journalism Quarterly***, 58:96-98, Spring 1981.

7. For more information on the uses and gratifications approach, see: Philip Palmgreen, "Uses and Gratifications: A Theoretical Perspective," pp 20-55, in Robert N. Bostrom (ed.), ***Communication Yearbook 8***, Beverly Hills: Sage, 1984; and Jack M. McLeod and Lee B. Becker, "The Uses and Gratifications Approach," pp 67-99, in Dan D. Nimmo and Keith R. Sanders (eds.), ***Handbook of Political Communication***, Beverly Hills: Sage, 1981.

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Table 1. Motivations for reading dental publications. (Motivations with large means are more important than motivations with small means.)*

Motivation	Sophomore & junior mean (N =)	Senior & new grad mean (N =)	t value
For information about clinical dentistry	4.23 (245)	4.29 (239)	.92
For information about business aspects of dental practice	4.09 (246)	4.16 (239)	1.01
To find out what other dentists and dental students are doing	3.78 (245)	3.60 (239)	-2.47**
Because the public media don't adequately cover issues important to dentistry	3.77 (243)	3.57 (238)	-2.09**
To enjoy dentistry free from academic pressures	3.59 (245)	3.39 (238)	-2.13**
Because professionals ought to read their professional publications	3.56 (245)	3.55 (238)	-.09
Because the only way to know whether the publication has something that will interest you is to read it	3.56 (245)	3.52 (235)	-.36
For information about clinical procedures you weren't taught in school	3.52 (246)	3.97 (239)	5.06**
For notices about fellowships, internships, and other opportunities	3.51 (245)	3.28 (238)	-2.44**

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Table 1, continued. Motivations for reading dental publications. (Motivations with large means are more important than motivations with small means.)*

Motivation	Sophomore & junior mean (N =)	Senior & new grad mean (N =)	t value
For information about dental associations	3.30 (245)	3.16 (236)	-1.60
For classified advertisements	3.19 (246)	3.09 (237)	-1.02
Because someone recommended an article or publication	3.17 (245)	3.17 (238)	-.04
As background reading for dental research	2.94 (245)	2.81 (236)	-1.35
For quizzes and articles that let you review what you've already learned	2.92 (246)	2.94 (239)	.20
Because you heard other dentists or dental students discuss a publication	2.84 (245)	2.94 (237)	1.13
Because you generally have nothing better to do at the time	1.99 (245)	1.99 (238)	.04

*This table displays the results of t-tests between sophomore and junior dental students and seniors and new graduates. Each variable was measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1-strongly disagree, 5-strongly agree): "People read dental publications for different reasons. If you do read dental publications, why do you read them? Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement."

**The difference between the two means is statistically significant at the p<.05 level or better.

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Table 2. Importance of topics which dental publications cover. (Topics with large means are more important than topics with small means.)*

Topic	Sophomore & junior mean (N -)	Senior & new grad mean (N -)	t value
Practice management	4.32 (258)	4.44 (239)	-1.38
Cosmetic dentistry	4.30 (255)	4.33 (239)	.51
Quality of dental education	4.26 (257)	4.07 (239)	-2.69**
Financial aid for students	4.25 (257)	3.94 (239)	-4.19**
Preparing for board exams	4.22 (258)	4.08 (239)	-1.84
Practice location	4.20 (258)	4.05 (238)	-2.09**
Advanced training	4.19 (256)	4.04 (238)	-2.31**
Modes of practice	4.16 (257)	4.02 (239)	-2.38**
Stress	4.13 (256)	4.13 (239)	.13
Dental research	4.11 (257)	3.76 (239)	-4.74**
Dental insurance	4.08 (258)	4.08 (239)	.04
Dental equipment and supplies	4.07 (258)	4.01 (239)	-.98
Computerization	3.96 (258)	3.81 (238)	-2.15**

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Table 2, continued. Importance of topics which dental publications cover. (Topics with large means are more important than topics with small means.)*

Topic	Sophomore & junior mean (N =)	Senior & new grad mean (N =)	t value
Access for elderly and handicapped	3.96 (257)	3.94 (239)	-.35
Dental busyness	3.90 (252)	3.77 (232)	-1.85
Dental school tuition	3.73 (256)	3.56 (239)	-2.14**
Dental auxiliaries	3.70 (256)	3.69 (239)	-.13
Forensic dentistry	3.63 (257)	3.52 (239)	-1.48
Retail dentistry	3.54 (255)	3.37 (238)	-1.95
Due process for students	3.50 (253)	3.24 (234)	-3.52**
International dentistry	3.43 (258)	3.33 (239)	-1.37
Representation in organized dentistry	3.37 (256)	3.27 (237)	-1.22

*This table displays the results of t-tests between sophomore and junior dental students and seniors and new graduates. Each topic was evaluated by respondents on a 5-point Likert-type scale: "Different people have different ideas about which topics are the most important for dental publications to cover. Here is a list of some topics that people have told us they think are important. How important do you think each topics is? 5-very important, 4-important, 3-neither important nor unimportant, 2-unimportant, 1-very unimportant."

**The difference between the two means is statistically significant at the p<.05 level or better.

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Table 3. Perceptions of how interesting each publication is. (Publications with large means are more interesting than publications with small means.)*

Publication	Sophomore & junior mean (N =)	Senior & new grad mean (N =)	t value
JADA	3.13 (239)	3.01 (236)	-1.78
Dental Student	2.88 (216)	2.61 (205)	-3.43**
General Dentistry	2.79 (53)	3.02 (168)	1.83
Dentistry84	2.77 (171)	2.63 (186)	-1.79
Dental Management	2.69 (59)	2.76 (182)	.57
Dental Economics	2.55 (58)	2.68 (183)	1.04
ASDA Handbook	2.50 (197)	2.10 (163)	-4.46**
ADA News	2.45 (213)	2.33 (216)	-1.57
ASDA News	2.42 (207)	2.26 (186)	-2.06**

*This table displays the results of t-tests between sophomore and junior dental students and seniors and new graduates. Respondents rated the nine publications on the following four-point scale: "Different people enjoy reading different publications. Rate these publications in terms of how interesting they are to you. Are they (4) very interesting, (3) interesting, (2) somewhat interesting, or (1) not at all interesting?"

**The difference between the two means is statistically significant at the p<.05 level or better.

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Table 4. Perceptions of how much useful information each publication supplies. (Publications with large means supply more information than publications with small means.)*

Publication	Sophomore & junior mean (N =)	Senior & new grad mean (N =)	t value
JADA	3.31 (241)	3.30 (237)	-.26
ASDA Handbook	3.13 (198)	2.77 (158)	-4.05**
Dental Student	2.97 (215)	2.78 (200)	-2.60**
Dental Management	2.95 (60)	3.04 (181)	.80
General Dentistry	2.94 (51)	3.33 (165)	3.66**
Dentistry84	2.92 (174)	2.81 (182)	-1.49
Dental Economics	2.79 (57)	3.01 (178)	2.02**
ADA News	2.67 (215)	2.56 (215)	-1.35
ASDA News	2.66 (208)	2.35 (185)	-3.96**

*This table displays the results of t-tests between sophomore and junior dental students and seniors and new graduates. Respondents rated the nine publications on the following four-point scale: "Now rate the publications according to how much useful information they supply to you. Do they give you (4) a lot of useful information, (3) some useful information, (2) not much useful information, or (1) no useful information."

**The difference between the two means is statistically significant at the $p<.05$ level or better.

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Table 5. Percentage of respondents who have read the following publications at least once within the last 12 months.*

Publication	Sophomore & junior percentage (N-239)	Senior & new grad percentage (N-241)	X^2value/phi
Journal of the American Dental Association***	90.7%	97.5%	8.90/.14**
Dental Student	83.8	80.9	.53/.04
ADA News	79.5	84.6	1.88/.07
ASDA News	75.3	69.7	1.68/.06
ASDA Handbook	69.9	52.7	14.87/.18**
Dentistry84	64.1	69.3	1.29/.06
Dental Management	19.3	68.5	121.09/.50**
Dental Economics	17.8	63.9	108.82/.47**
General Dentistry	15.1	62.7	118.03/.49**

*This table displays the results of chi-square (X^2) tests between graduating class (sophomores and juniors versus seniors and new graduates) and whether the respondents had read a publication at least once within the last 12 months (read a publication versus not read it). The phi coefficient shows the strength of the relationship between graduating class and reading.

**There is a statistically significant relationship between graduating class and whether a publication has been read, $p<.05$.

***Henceforth the Journal of the American Dental Association will be referred to as JADA.

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Table 6. Amount of each publication read by respondents. (Publications with large means are read more completely than publications with small means.)*

Publication	Sophomore & junior mean (N -)	Senior & new grad mean (N -)	t value
JADA	2.49 (241)	2.67 (236)	2.22**
Dental Student	2.47 (217)	2.39 (199)	-.88
ASDA News	2.40 (207)	2.38 (184)	-.15
Dentistry84	2.37 (178)	2.30 (180)	-.74
ADA News	2.30 (216)	2.49 (209)	2.03**
ASDA Handbook	2.28 (194)	2.09 (149)	-1.79
General Dentistry	2.27 (52)	2.64 (162)	2.63**
Dental Economics	2.18 (57)	2.24 (177)	.45
Dental Management	2.12 (58)	2.31 (178)	1.39

*This table displays the results of t-tests between sophomore and junior dental students and seniors and new graduates. Respondents rated the nine publications on the following four-point scale: "When you pick up a copy of these publications, do you read (4) all or almost all of it, (3) most of it, (2) some of it, or (1) only a little of it?"

**The difference between the two means is statistically significant at the p<.05 level or better.

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Table 7. Percentage of one year's issues that respondents read. (Publications with large means are read more often during the year than publications with small means.)*

Publication	Sophomore & junior mean (N -)	Senior & new grad mean (N -)	t value
JADA	2.73 (242)	2.87 (236)	1.38
Dental Student	2.57 (224)	2.26 (222)	-2.59**
ASDA News	2.40 (210)	1.95 (218)	-3.52**
ASDA Handbook	2.37 (204)	1.57 (197)	-5.51**
ADA News	2.35 (214)	2.25 (233)	-.77
Dentistry84	2.15 (194)	2.14 (208)	-.04
Dental Economics	.86 (119)	1.81 (208)	6.35**
General Dentistry	.79 (113)	2.18 (147)	8.33**
Dental Management	.75 (122)	1.92 (214)	8.48**

*This table displays the results of t-tests between sophomore and junior dental students and seniors and new graduates. Respondents rated the nine publications on the following five-point scale: "Some publications are issued more often during the year than others. For each of these publications, what percentage of the issues in a year do you read? 5-100% of all issues, 4-75% of all issues, 3-50% of all issues, 2-25% of all issues, 1-none."

**The difference between the two means is statistically significant at the p<.05 level or better.

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